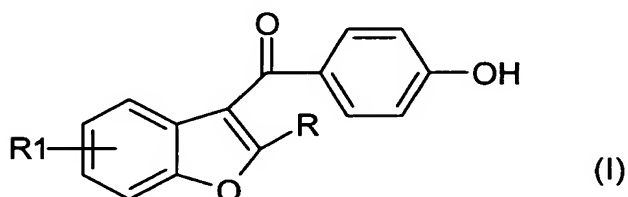


This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

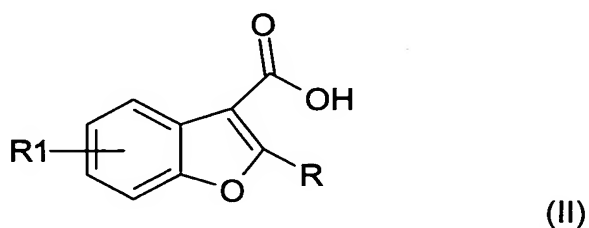
- 1.(Currently Amended) Process for the preparation of a 2-(n-alkyl)-3-(4-hydroxybenzoyl)benzofuran of formula (I)



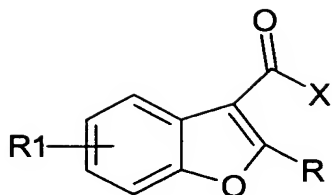
in which R represents a linear or branched alkyl radical including from 1 to 5 carbon atoms and R1 represents a linear or branched alkyl radical including from 1 to 3 carbon atoms, a linear or branched alkoxy radical including from 1 to 3 carbon atoms, a halogen atom or a nitro radical,

in which

- a) a 2-alkyl-3-carboxybenzofuran of formula (II)



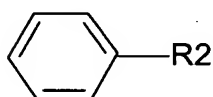
in which R and R1 have the meanings already indicated, is reacted with a halogenating agent to produce the compound of formula (III)



(III)

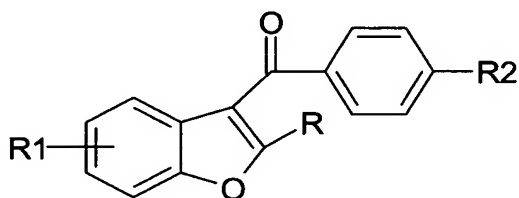
in which X represents a halogen atom and R and R1 have the meanings already indicated,

- b) then the compound of formula (III) is reacted with an alkyl phenyl ether of formula

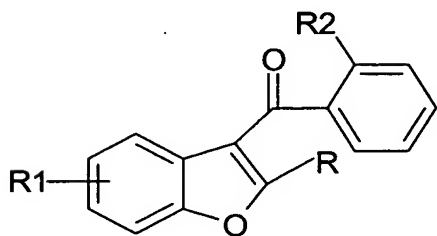


in which R2 represents a linear or branched alkoxy radical including from 1 to 5 carbon atoms,

in the presence of a Lewis acid, to produce a mixture of 2-alkyl-3-(4-alkoxybenzoyl)benzofuran of formula (IV) and of 2-alkyl-3-(2-alkoxybenzoyl)benzofuran of formula (IVa)



(IV)



(IVa)

in which R, R1 and R2 have the meanings already indicated,

- c) and the mixture is subjected to a dealkylation reaction to produce the product of formula (I), which is isolated, if desired.

2.(Currently Amended) Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the halogenating agent is ~~chosen~~ selected from the group consisting of phosphorus trichloride  $\text{PCl}_3$ , phosphorus pentachloride  $\text{PCl}_5$ , phosphorus oxychloride  $\text{POCl}_3$ , oxalyl chloride  $(\text{COCl})_2$ , phosgene  $\text{COCl}_2$  and thionyl chloride  $\text{SOCl}_2$ .

3.(Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to Claim 1 ~~[[or 2]]~~, wherein a molar ratio of ~~characterized in that the amount of halogenating agent employed is such that the~~ halogenating agent/compound of formula (II) ~~molar ratio has a value~~ ranges from 1 to 5.

4.(Currently Amended) ~~Process~~ The process of claim 1, wherein ~~according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the alkyl phenyl ether is anisole.~~

5.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the reaction of the compound of formula (II) with the halogenating agent is carried out in the presence of an organic solvent~~ ~~chosen from~~ selected from the group consisting of halogenated

aliphatic hydrocarbons, ~~[[and/or]]~~ aromatic hydrocarbons, ~~[[and]]~~ alkyl phenyl ethers, and mixtures thereof.

6.(Currently Amended)     The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to~~  
~~either of Claims 4 and 5, characterized in that the reaction of the compound of~~  
formula (II) with the halogenating agent is carried out in the presence of an  
organic solvent which is anisole.

7.(Currently Amended)     The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to~~  
~~one of Claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the amount of alkyl phenyl ether~~  
~~employed is such that the~~ a molar ratio of alkyl phenyl ether/compound of  
formula (III) ~~molar ratio is~~ ranges from 1 to 10.

8.(Currently Amended)     The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to~~  
~~one of Claims 1 to 7, characterized in that the temperature of the reaction~~  
between the compound of formula (III) and the alkyl phenyl ether takes place at  
a temperature ~~[[is]]~~ between -5°C and ambient temperature.

9.(Currently Amended)     The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to~~  
~~one of Claims 1 to 8, characterized in that the reaction between the compound~~  
of formula (III) and the alkyl phenyl ether is carried out in the presence of an  
organic solvent which is a halogenated aliphatic hydrocarbon, ~~[[and/or]]~~ or an  
aromatic hydrocarbon or an alkyl phenyl ether, or a mixture thereof.

10.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to one of Claims 1 to 9, characterized in that~~ the Lewis acid used in the reaction between the compound of formula (III) and the alkyl phenyl ether is selected from the group consisting of an aluminium halide, a boron halide, a titanium halide, a tin halide, a bismuth halide, and an iron halide ~~or aluminium chloride, preferably aluminium chloride.~~

11.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to one of Claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the amount of Lewis acid is such that the~~ a molar ratio of Lewis acid/compound of formula (III) molar ratio ~~[[is]] ranges from 1 to 10.~~

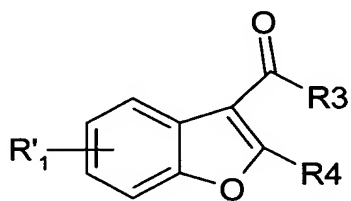
12.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to one of Claims 1 to 11, characterized in that the dealkylation reaction c) is carried out under hot conditions~~ a heating temperature of from 40 to 100 °C in the presence of a Lewis acid.

13.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to Claim 12, characterized in that the Lewis acid used in the alkylation~~ dealkylation reaction is carried out in the presence of a Lewis acid selected from the group consisting of an aluminium halide, a boron halide, a titanium halide, a tin halide, a bismuth halide, and an iron halide ~~or aluminium chloride.~~

14.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~Process according to one of Claims 1 to 13, characterized in that the amount of Lewis acid employed in the dealkylation reaction a molar ratio of stage is such that the Lewis acid/compound of formula (IV) and (IVa) molar ratio is~~ ranges from 1 to 10.

15.(Currently Amended) The process of claim 12, wherein ~~Process according to one of Claims 12 to 14, characterized in that the heating temperature in the dealkylation stage is from 40°C to 100~~ 50°C to 65°C.

16.(Currently Amended) A compound of formula (V)



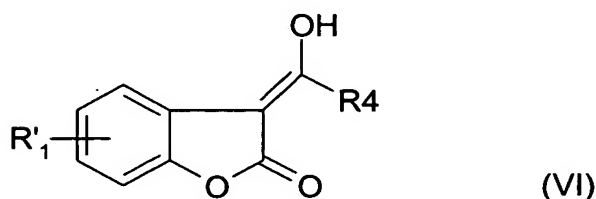
(V)

in which R3 represents a hydroxyl radical or represents a halogen atom  
~~has the meaning of X already indicated in Claim 1,~~

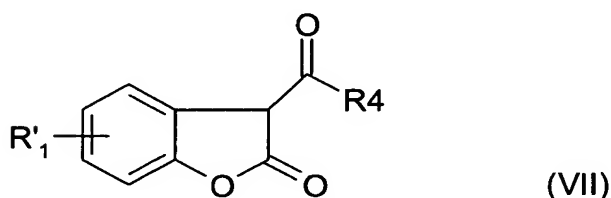
R4 represents a linear or branched alkyl radical including from 2 to 5 carbon atoms and R', represents a nitro radical.

17.(Original) [[A]] The compound according to Claim 16, characterized in that R', represents a nitro radical in the 5 position and R4 represents an n-butyl radical.

18.(Currently Amended) A process [[Process]] for the preparation of a 2-(n-alkyl)-3-carboxybenzofuran of formula (II), characterized in that a 3-(1-hydroxyalkylidene)-3H-benzofuran-2-one of formula (VI):

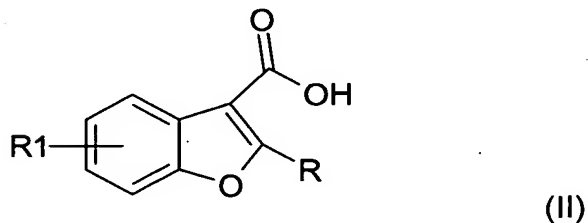


or its 3-alkanoyl-3H-benzofuran-2-one ketonic tautomeric form of formula (VII):



in which ~~R4 and R'1~~ R4 represents a linear or branched alkyl radical including from 2 to 5 carbon atoms and R'1 represents a nitro radical

~~have the meanings already indicated in Claim 16,~~ is treated by heating and by an acid catalyst in concentrated aqueous solution [[at]] of at least 80% by weight and then [[in that]] the expected product of formula (II)



is isolated.

- 19.(Original)                      Process according to Claim 18, characterized in that the treatment by heating of the compound of formula (VI) or of formula (VII) is carried out in a carboxylic acid.
- 20.(Currently Amended)    The process of claim 18, wherein ~~Process according to either of Claims 18 and 19, characterized in that the acid catalyst in concentrated aqueous solution is concentrated sulphuric acid at between 80% and 95% by weight.~~
- 21.(New)                              The process of claim 1, wherein the Lewis acid in the reaction of the compound of formula (III) and the alkyl phenyl ether is aluminum chloride.
- 22.(New)                              The process of claim 13, wherein the Lewis acid is aluminum chloride.